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ABSTRACT

As educators try to make schools more responsive to the diverse needs of students, public alternative schools are becoming increasingly investigated as viable and necessary options. This book provides an overview of public alternative education in the United States. Following the foreword by Robert D. Barr, acknowledgements, and the introduction, chapter 1 outlines the historical background of alternatives in public education. Chapter 2 offers the rationale for variety and choice in public schools. The third chapter analyzes the effectiveness of public schools of choice. Six exemplary public alternative schools and programs are described in detail in chapter 4. Each of the schools and programs represents a different option: a learning center, a continuation school, an open school, a school without walls, a school-within-a-school program, and a magnet elementary program. Chapter 5 describes the attempts of Yakima, Washington, to serve at-risk students. The future of public alternative education is speculated upon in the final chapter. It is emphasized that such programs, having proved successful with otherwise neglected at-risk students, can and must be expanded in the coming years. (Contains 140 references.) (LM1)

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